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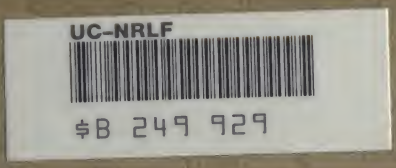

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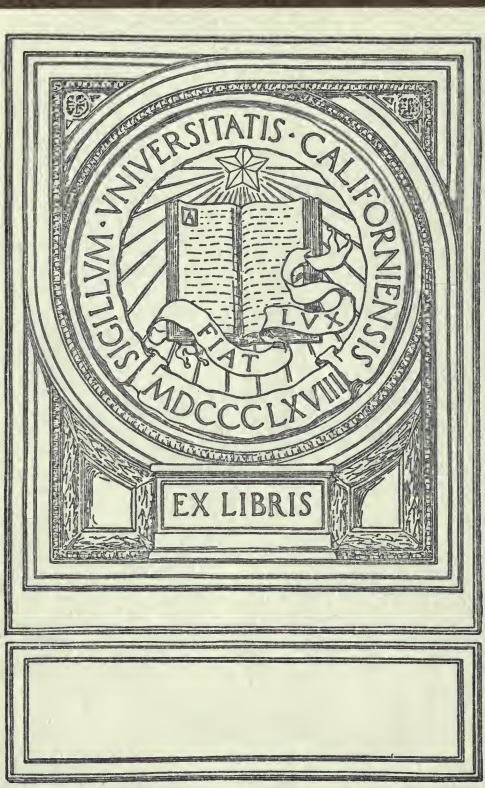
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WEAK POINTS.

WEAK POINTS.

A FARCE,

In Two Acts.

BY

JOHN BALDWIN BUCKSTONE, Esq.

MEMBER OF THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY.

As performed at

THE THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

CORRECTLY PRINTED FROM THE PROMPTER'S COPY, WITH THE CAST OF CHARACTERS, COSTUME, SCENIC ARRANGEMENT, SIDES OF ENTRANCE AND EXIT, AND RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ILLUSTRATED WITH AN ETCHING, BY PIERCE EGAN THE YOUNGER, FROM A DRAWING TAKEN DURING THE REPRESENTATION.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

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WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

Dramatis Personæ and Costume.

First performed April 28, 1838.

MR. DOCKER. Brown coat, buttoned to the throat, black trousers, shoes, white stockings, dark bald wig . . .	Mr. WEBSTER.
MR. JOLLY. Pepper and salt coat, white buttons, white double-breasted waistcoat, white corded breeches, large topped boots, light brown wig, and large whiskers, white large neckcloth . .	Mr. STRICKLAND.
JEMMY WHEEDLE. Military blue frock-coat, stock, collar turned down, white duck trousers, arched over the instep, wig, extreme of the present fashion, foraging-cap	Mr. BUCKSTONE.
THOMAS VERNON. Dark frock-coat, silk waistcoat, light trousers . .	Mr. HEMMING.
AMOS HUXTER. Dark coat, light waistcoat, double-breasted, white apron, drab breeches, and gaiters, brown George .	Mr. T. F. MATTHEWS.
Two Bow-street Officers . . .	Mr. BISHOP. Mr. GREEN.
MRS. DOCKER. Brown silk dress, cap. Last scene. White wrapper, and nightcap	Madame SALA.
MISS PENELOPE PUMP. Dark silk dress, habit-shirt, neat cap. Last dress. A calash and cloak	Mrs. GLOVER.
AGNES. White muslin dress . .	Miss COOPER.
SALLY PYBUS. 1st dress. A dark spotted cotton dress, coloured handkerchief, over the shoulders, apron, old black velvet bonnet, cap, and (in the first scene only, the hair in papers.) 2d dress. Crimson silk dress, coloured sash, large laced cap, trimmed with flowers . . .	Mrs. FITZWILLIAM.
MRS. HUXTER. Plain cotton gown, shawl, and cap	Mrs. GALLOT.

EXPLANATION OF THE STAGE DIRECTIONS.

L. means first entrance, left. R. first entrance, right. S. E. L. second entrance, left. S. E. R. second entrance, right. U. E. L. upper entrance, left. U. E. R. upper entrance, right. C. centre. L. C. left centre. R. C. right centre. T. E. L. third entrance, left. T. E. R. third entrance, right. Observing you are supposed to face the audience.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following is an original farce—that is to say—it is neither translated nor adapted from the French; though where an amusing vaudeville is successfully produced at a foreign Theatre the sneers at the poor scribe, who with materials drawn from the same source, may venture to make an English audience laugh, partake marvellously of small cant, and is usually found to emanate from a quarter, that writes itself, and is either wanting in the tact necessary for the transformation of a French farce into an English one, or that looks upon its own very original bantlings, as the wonders of the earth, and has not the common charity to introduce the child of a stranger, to the notice of a coveted public.

AS to WEAK POINTS, where is the human being without his Weak Point? A question that will shortly be answered, it is hoped, by the words "not one;" more especially if it relates to the possession of a copy of this Number.

The quaker's advice to his son, applies to all Farce writers: "Aminadab get money—honestly if you can—but get money."—The motto of the interlude scribbler should be, "Make your audience laugh—legitimately if you can—but make them laugh." In the present instance the audience laughed merrily, and as the legitimate end of Farce is to create laughter, the conclusion is that the author of "Weak Points" made his audience laugh *very* legitimately.

WEAK POINTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room close to the shop of* AMOS HUXTER; AMOS *and* MRS. HUXTER *discovered—table, two chairs.*

Amos. (*reading a letter.*) "I dare say, my dear uncle, you wonder that you've not heard from me lately, the fact is I've been on a tower."

Mrs. H. On a tower! what has the boy been doing there?

Amos. "A tower through Bullen and Belgum—I have exhausted the three hundred pounds left me by my late worthy missus, but the annuity of fifty pounds per Anno Domini will enable me to appear as a gentleman till such time as I can form some good connexion."

Mrs. H. A good connexion means a wife—of course.

Amos. It don't always follow of course, my dear.

Mrs. H. You've no reason to contradict me I'm sure—as for Jemmy, how the lad has got on in the world to be sure—what was he? a poor boy running about the streets, with scarcely a shoe to his feet, till he became errand-boy in a shop, where an old maiden lady took to him, who hired him as her footman.

Amos. And when she died left him three hundred pounds in cash, and fifty pounds a year for life—and all through his studying what he called her weak points—but let me finish the letter. "I have heard from a friend that I met on the Bullywards, that a lady is living in your neighbourhood with five thousand pounds in the bank—I wish to get introduced into the family where she resides—but you must not betray my relationship to *you*, because I'm now quite the gentleman." Umph! that's as much as to say that I'm not!—

Mrs. H. Oh, Jemmy, you're a deep un.

Amos. (*reading.*) "The lady in question is the cousin of Mr. Docker."—

Mrs. H. Docker! that's the mean man at the old house—near the end of the town.

Amos. The stingiest old fellow that ever lived.

Mrs. H. Jemmy will stand no chance there—there's somebody in the shop (*looking off*, L. H.) as I live it's Sally Pybus, Mr. Docker's maid—suppose I ask her in here, and get some information from her for Jemmy.

Amos. Do.

Mrs. H. I will—because if Jemmy should marry Mr. Docker's

cousin through our means, I'm sure he won't forget his poor uncle and aunt. [*Exit*, L. H. 1 E.

Amos. Deep fellow, my nevvy—how he contrived to get the old lady to leave him all her money I can't divine. Jemmy must have wheedled her nicely—with his studying human nature's weak points as he calls it—poor old lady, she always suspected that every body wanted to rob her, so my nevvy made all her relations out as so many thieves and murderers, and she believed him—ha! ha! Deep fellow, Jemmy.

Mrs. H. (*without.*) Pray walk in, Sally, no one here but my husband.

Enter MRS. HUXTER *and* SALLY.

Sal. Ah, Mr. Huxter, good morning—'stonished to see me no doubt—coming of vulgar errands, but Mr. Docker sent away the footboy yesterday.

Amos. What, Thomas?

Sal. Yes.

Amos. For what?

Sal. For the sake of economy, as he calls it: says, as he only cleaned boots, and went errands, that he should save three pounds a year, besides the boy's keep, by my putting his work to mine.

Mrs. H. How mean!

Amos. Very shabby—very!

Sal. How can he expect a genteel young person like me, to fetch every vulgar article that's wanted for the house—and polish clumsy Wellingtons. Now, I'm obliged to leave my work to fetch some common candles, for Miss Agnes to burn at night. Mr. Docker won't allow wax any longer—thinks dips quite good enough for miss to let gutter away, while she sits thinking of what she calls the unaccountable agony of human existence.

Amos. The young lady is in love, I suppose.

Sal. She has a beau, to be sure, but as to her being in love, I can't be bound to say, for she seems never so happy as when she's quite miserable.

Amos. Ah! like my wife, here, delighted if she can only find something to fret about.

Mrs. H. Well, I'm sure.

Amos. Silence!

Sal. Then Miss Docker tells Mr. Vernon, her lover, that his heart is *gallows* to every feeling of sentiment—sometimes won't allow him to go near her, but sits alone for hours in the nursery, talking of a form of light that comes to see her in her dreams.

Amos. (*looking off*, L. H.) There's the omnibus at the door.

Mrs. H. What young gentleman is that coming in here?

Amos. (*aside to* MRS. HUXTER.) As I live, it's Jemmy.

Mrs. H. Who shall we say he is to Sally?

Amos. I'll manage it; first let me put him on his guard. Don't go, Sally, there's only somebody in the shop.

[*Exit* AMOS, L.

Mrs. H. (*looking off*, L. H.) Bless me, what a genteel young man!

Sal. Young man!—where?

Mrs. H. Talking to my husband.

Sal. Dear me, he *is* a duck!

Jem. (*without*, L. H. 1 E.) Won't give more than sixpence.

A Voice. Shilling, sir—it's my fare.

Jem. A shilling fare—in an omnibus—never!

Mrs. H. I declare my husband's bringing him in here.

Sal. Oh, dear! and I'm such a fright—how's my hair—oh! my cap.

[SALLY *runs to a looking-glass, and arranges her cap.*

Enter AMOS HUXTER, *followed by* JEMMY, AMOS *carrying his carpet-bag.*

Jem. Never heard of such a thing—how many miles from the Bank to here?

Amos. Five and a half.

Jem. Sixpence, of course.

Amos. He took it?

Jem. Yes, yes; I addressed him as the proprietor of the bus—and he took the compliment and the sixpence.

Amos. (*aside.*) Don't notice your aunt yet.

Jem. (*aside.*) No, no!

Amos. That's the maid at Docker's.

Jem. Oh! I'll be a gentleman looking for lodgings. (*aloud.*) Perhaps your good lady can inform me of some genteel first floor to let.

Mrs. H. If you'll take a seat, sir, I've no doubt we shall hear of something that will suit you. (*aside.*) How he has grown!

[JEMMY *and* MRS. HUXTER *exchange looks. He regards* SALLY *as she comes down on his* R. H.

Jem. Bless me!

Mrs. H. What's the matter?

Jem. (*beckons* AMOS, *and whispers.*)

Mrs. H. Lord, Huxter, how rude to whisper!

Amos. The young gentleman was merely admiring our friend's figure.

Jem. Never saw any thing so lady-like.

Sal. Oh, sir, you quite dash me; I don't know where to look.

Jem. Wish I had the honour of knowing your pa!

Sal. (*sighing.*) Ah, sir.

Jem. Or, your ma?

Sal. Oh, sir, I'll not delude you, though by my looks and figure you may take me for a lady; I am sorry to say, I'm nothing of the sort.

Jem. Really!

Amos. The young woman is a servant at a Mr. Docker's, in the neighbourhood.

Jem. A servant! now you *do* astonish me—I've seen the world—I've mixed in the first circles on the Bullevards and in the

Borough; I've seen the aristocracy of every nation, both black and white—and I never—

Amos. What?

Jem. Saw such a ladylike-looking person. Surely, miss, excuse my calling you miss—your father is some reduced nobleman; must be, lost his fortune on the turf, and now he's obliged to cut it.

Sal. No, sir; my father has had the honour to be the Hampstead milkman for the last twenty years.

Jem. Well, one of nature's dreadful mistakes—you *ought* to have been born a lady.

Sal. (*aside.*) What a very nice gentleman!

Jem. Docker, Docker! how strange!

Sal. What's strange, sir?

Jem. Can I admit you into my confidence?

Sal. Certainly, sir!

Jem. That family where you reside, I am most anxious to be introduced into; is there not a relative of Mr. Docker's living with him?

Sal. Master's cousin you mean?

Jem. Miss Penelope.

Sal. Pump!

Jem. Ah, Pump! a single lady!

Sal. Yes, sir, but she's only single at present; she has a beau, who I believe has popped.

Jem. O-ho! popped has he! and with effect?

Sal. I hardly know; sometimes she's making up her things to be married in, and then she puts them away again, and says she never shall have nerves for the wonderful change.

Jem. And the gentleman's name is—

Sal. Jolly. Such a nice old fellow! always giving me half-crowns, and so merry, only make him laugh, and he'll do anything for you.

Jem. And she is quite as generous with her money; she *has* money of course.

Sal. Hundreds, sir; but as for being generous, she takes after her cousin, stingy to a degree—and so suspisherus, the house rings from morning till night with her false charges against people, as the young policeman says.

Jem. Suspicious, eh?

Sal. Oh, dreadful! Think's ill of every body; and if Mr. Docker didn't make a profit by her board and lodging, he would never put up with her—and he is such a man for buying bargains—let him have one or two, and show him where he can save a few farthings in his house bills; and he'll be your friend for ever.

Jem. Bless me; I've the very thing for him. Does he want a telescope?

Sal. If it's very cheap, and a great bargain, he'll buy it without minding if he *wants* the article.

Jem. I'll call on him with it—an admirable telescope—cost

me a fortune. If you take it to the Cape of Good Hope, you can—not only see the moon, but its inhabitants, and almost hear their conversation.

Sal. La, sir!

Jem. Fact. I'll be at your house in half-an-hour, or less.

Sal. Very well; good day, sir! [SALLY *crosses to* L. H.

Jem. Wish you good day; 'pon my life, Mr. Huxter, I don't mean any nonsense, but really more natural grace I never beheld.

Sal. Oh, sir!

Jem. Her head is put so finely on her shoulders, and the cap on the head, and the bonnet on the cap—splendid!

Sal. Oh, I'm sure it's quite a fright!

Jem. And the more I look at you—the more—I—never!

Sal. Oh, sir! you do so diffuse me all over, I shan't be able to find my way home. What can he want with that odorous Miss Pump? [*Aside and exit, curtseying,* L. H. 1 E.

Jem. Ha! ha! Wasn't that well done, uncle? Now aunt how d'ye do? long time since I have seen you; don't you think I've improved? Haven't I quite a foreign air with me?

Mrs. H. Quite! Never saw anybody look so outlandish.

Jem. Yes; what we call *distangy,*—and *commy fo,* in the society I've been used to lately. Now for my visit to Mr. Docker.

Amos. And have you a telescope so valuable?

Jem. It's in my carpet-bag; it belonged to an old fisherman at Boulogney; it's worth a guinea; I'll offer it for half-a-crown—only let me fairly get into the house, they shan't get me out again in a hurry—somebody in the shop, don't say I'm your nevvy to anybody.

Amos. Not a word. [*Exit,* L. H. 1 E.

Mrs. H. You can lodge here if you like; we have a spare bed to let.

Jem. I'm quite incog, you know.

Mrs. H. Three and sixpence a week.

Jem. No; three shillings.

Mrs. H. Can't afford less.

Jem. Not to your dear nevvy?

Mrs. H. Can't indeed!

Jem. Upon my honour, aunt, you look younger and younger every time I see you.

Mrs. H. Oh, Jemmy!

Jem. You do, indeed aunt.

Mrs. H. Do you think so?

Jem. Upon my honour.

Mrs. H. Oh, Jemmy!

Jem. Three shillings?

Mrs. H. Ah, well, I can't refuse you.

Jem. Oh, you nice old lady.

[*Exeunt,* R. H. 1 E.

SCENE II.—*An apartment of* MR. DOCKER'S, *folding doors at the back*—MR. DOCKER *at table on the* R. H., *examining some tradesmen's bills, an account book, and money by the side of him*—MRS. DOCKER *sitting opposite to him with papers in her hand*—AGNES *is reclining in the corner,* L. H., *in an easy chair, in melancholy contemplation.*

Doc. What's this? Lamb tenpence per pound, I won't pay it; can get the best in the market for ninepence-halfpenny.

Mrs. D. It's the regular price, my dear.

Doc. I won't pay it—six pounds—deduct a halfpenny from every pound—take off the odd farthings, and that reduces the bill; threepence farthing in the sum tottle of the whole.

Mrs. D. Oh, Joseph, my dear!

Doc. If the man won't take it, I shan't deal with him.

Mrs. D. Now about a new bonnet for Agnes.

Doc. What! a new bonnet again!

Mrs. D. Again! it's a year since she had one.

Agn. Look at it, pa! (*showing a dirty white misshapen bonnet, that hangs on her chair back.*) Utterly impossible to be seen in it.

Doc. A very handsome bonnet still—you must take it to pieces—turn it—and iron out the ribbons—it will then look as good as new—cost you only a little trouble, and save me five-and-twenty shillings.

Agn. Oh! the misery of life; when one's nearest relative—he to whom one owes one's blank existence, can sternly deny to a desolate heart, the fast fading joy of a new bonnet.

Doc. I can't afford it—I'm going to the Haymarket next week, and I may pick up a cheap straw.

Mrs. D. Oh, Joseph! we shall both be ashamed to be seen in the public streets.

Enter MISS PENELOPE PUMP, C. D., *a newspaper in her hand.*

Miss P. There's no knowing any one—who would have thought it? that dashing gentleman at the end of the town—Mr. Alfred Tufton, he who kept his hunters, and admired me so at the races.

Doc. Admired you at the races! the day of the *oaks*—I know—what of him?

Miss P. Applying to be discharged from the Fleet Prison!

Doc. Always paid his bills without casting them; never was sure that his sum tottle was correct—see what it has brought him to. If I were not to contrive, and economize, and scrutinize, where would my family be? Eh! there's a penny too muc in the fishmonger's bill—cast it up yourself.

[*Giving the bill to* MRS. DOCKER.

SALLY *enters at the back.*

Sal. Oh, sir!

Doc. What now?

Sal. Such a bargain!

Doc. A bargain!

Sal. Yes, sir; a telescope—you remember, sir, during the last eclipse of the sun, how you wanted one.

Doc. I did!

Sal. And how we all blacked our eyes in looking through your smoked glass, and missis had such a dark rim round hern, that it got about you had been beating her, and all the people in the town have called you a brute ever since!

Doc. Well, well, the bargain.

Sal. A gentleman with a telescope, worth twenty guineas, come from the Cape of Good Hope, where the people in the moon are to be seen.

Doc. What does he want for it?

Sal. Only half-a-crown!

Doc. That's cheap, if it's a Dollond—let me see him.

[JEMMY *and* JOLLY *heard laughing without.*

MR. JOLLY *enters from the back, down* C.

Jol. Ha! ha! the pleasantest fellow I ever met with in all my life. Ha! ha! ha! such an odd story—never saw him before—met him on the mat in the passage—told me the drollest joke—shall laugh as long as I live, whenever I think of it—ha! ha! ha!

Miss P. Mr. Jolly—I'm ashamed of you—rude laughter is excessively vulgar—read Chesterfield.

Jol. Never! never! while there's a Joe Miller left in the world—ha! ha! ha! man in bed—wooden leg—left out at the bottom—maid took it for the handle of the warming-pan—pulled man on the floor—maid in fits—ha! ha! never heard such a thing—never.

Sal. It's the gentleman with the telescope.

Doc. (*to* SALLY.) Tell him to come in.

Miss P. No, no; he may be some improper character.

Agn. If he indulges in any levity while I am in the room—I shall leave it instantly.

[JOLLY *takes a seat on the* L. H. *of the table at which* MISS PENELOPE *is sitting.*

Jol. Ha! ha! ha! have him by all means!

Sal. (*at back.*) Walk in, if you please, sir.

[JEMMY *appears at the back; a large telescope in his hand; he bows profoundly to* MR. DOCKER, *looks demurely at* MISS DIANA, *winks at* JOLLY, *and sighs deeply as he regards* AGNES.

Doc. Is that the article you have for sale?

Jem. Yes, sir, a splendid glass! I would not have parted with it—but hearing that you were in want of such a thing—I made bold to call—my only motive for disposing of it is—that I am travelling, and—and—am now so well acquainted with astronomy, that I've no further occasion for a telescope.

Doc. (*examining it.*) Half-a-crown, eh?

Jem. I merely put that sum on it because I don't wish to give it away entirely.

Doc. Two shillings?

Jem. Really sir!

Doc. Though I don't want it, I'll have it—if you say two shillings.

Jem. Well, sir,—well—as you please.

[*The chair in which* MISS PENLOPE *is sitting, breaks down with her—she screams.*

All. What's the matter?

Miss. P. One of your cheap chairs, Mr. Docker—we shall all break our necks, I know we shall.

Jol. Ha! ha! ha! this is the fourth gone out of the new half-dozen—three in the next room, backs, arms, and legs all dislocated—broke down in one myself yesterday—thought I should have died with laughing, ha, ha!

Miss P. I think you might hand me another, Mr. Jolly—and not stand there laughing.

Jol. I beg your pardon—(*he hands* MISS PENELOPE *to his own chair—and takes another for himself in the centre.*)

Doc. (*looking at chair.*) Never was so taken in, in all my life—gave one pound for the half-dozen.

Jem. A pound! not worth half the money—take me with you when you want to get a bargain. Bless you, at my villa at Fulham, I could show you wonders in that way—fifty-guinea pier-glasses picked up for nothing.

Doc. Indeed!—where?

Jem. You shall know by-and-by.

Doc. Attend sales, I suppose?

Jem. No, no—when we are better acquainted, I'll put you in a way to spend your money in a manner that shall delight you.

Doc. Will you take a glass of sherry, sir?

Jol. Oh, oh, oh—the first time I ever heard such a question put by Joseph—oh, oh, oh!

Jem. You're very kind.

Doc. Sally, place two glasses.

Sal. Sir, are you serious?

Doc. Do as I bid you!

Sal. Going to give away his wine, oh my—

[SALLY *places two glasses from a sideboard on* DOCKER'S *table*—DOCKER *goes out at the back*—JEMMY *crosses behind to* JOLLY *and whispers.*

Jol. (*in centre.*) Oh, don't—I shall die—ha, ha!

Jem. 'Pon my life it's a fact.

Jol. No!

Jem. Yes!

Jol. Ha, ha, ha!

Jem. Droll, an't it!

Jol. Fine fun! Fine fun!

Jem. (*crossing to* MISS PENELOPE, L. H.) Mr. Docker has been dreadfully deceived in his purchase of the chairs—thought the seller a fair dealer no doubt—it's awful to think how people

are deceived by appearances, I've been a severe sufferer in my time—smiling faces—hollow hearts—fair outsides—black insides—dreadful—dreadful!

Miss P. Ah, sir—it's a false world.

Jem. No knowing any one.

Miss P. Indeed there is not, sir.

Jem. Do you know *Mrs.* — *Mrs.* — the lady opposite?

Miss P. Tudway.

Jem. Yes. Mrs. Tudway.

Miss P. What of her?

(JEMMY *whispers in* PENELOPE'S *ear.*)

Miss P. No!

Jem. Yes!

Miss P. Not married!

Jem. True! ask Lord Cabbinger's butler.

Miss P. Lord who?

Jem. Cabbinger—Harley-street, Portman-square—*he* knows—tell you the particulars—when we are better acquainted—not prudent at present.

Miss P. Certainly not. (*aside.*) A very prepossessing young man.

Jol. What's that? something droll?

Jem. (*aside to* JOLLY.) Yes, tell you by-and-by.

Jol. Oh! ha! ha! ha! fine fellow that!

Jem. (*to* AGNES, *who is reading in the* L. H. *corner.*) Reading, miss?

Agn. I am, sir!

Jem. Poems?

Agn. Yes, sir!

Jem. Melancholy?

Agn. Yes, sir!

Jem. Ah! you should read Mrs. Grunts.

Agn. Whose sir?

Jem. Mrs. Grunts! oh, charming!

" Mine is the bosom seared with sorrow—
Mine is the—"

Oh, delicious—delicious—ah, miss—when one looks at the hollowness of the human heart, when one feels the emptiness of the—the—one turns away disgusted with life.

Agn. Do you sir? Are you indeed a congenial spirit?

Jem. Ah! Miss—young affections—blighted hopes—spring of life—fair blossoms—dead—gone—ah—(*groans and crosses with a sentimental air to* JOLLY.) Got another for you, such a rum un.

Jol. Oh, don't, I shall fall off the chair.

(JEMMY *whispers* JOLLY.)

Jol. Ha! ha! ha! well that's good—that's good—capital by Jove!

DOCKER *re-enters with a large decanter containing about two glasses of wine.*

Doc. Now—sir—taste this sherry!

Jem. With pleasure, sir!

[JEMMY *takes his seat opposite* DOCKER *on* MRS. DOCKER'S *leaving it to talk to* AGNES—DOCKER *pours him out a glass—then fills one for himself*—JEMMY *sips his wine with the air of a connoisseur.*

Doc. What do you think of that, sir?

Jem. Fair—what vintage?

Doc. I don't exactly know—picked it up at a sale—five-and-twenty.

Jem. You've been deceived, sir.

Doc. Have I?

Jem. Taken in.

Doc. You don't say so!

Jem. (*sipping and making a face.*) Five-and-twenty for that vinegar?

Doc. Vinegar!

Mrs. D. I told you it made us all ill!

Jem. (*to* MISS PENELOPE.) Allow me to offer you a glass.

Miss P. No thank you—I tasted it once—that was sufficient!

Jem. My dear sir, for three-and-twenty you shall drink hock—dreadful world, madam, the tricks in trade are shocking.

Miss P. Shocking, sir—shocking!

Jem. (*to* DOCKER.) What d'ye pay for coals?

Doc. Thirty a ton.

Mrs. D. And all slates, sir.

Jem. Dear, dear—you are imposed on by everybody.

Mrs. D. I always said so, Joseph, but you never mind me.

Jem. Put on your hat, (*to* DOCKER,) and come with me—shall fill your cellar—the very best—how much d'ye think?

Doc. Nine-and-twenty.

Jem. Eight-and-twenty and tenpence!

Doc. No!

Jem. Fact!

Doc. The best!

Jem. Finest in the world—take my arm, we'll go directly.

Doc. You'll dine with us to-day, I hope?

Jem. Certainly—certainly! [*He goes up the stage.*

Doc. You hear, Mrs. Docker.

Mrs. D. (*who has crossed behind, and come down on the* R. *of* DOCKER.) Then the joint must be cooked to-day.

Doc. And you and Agnes can dine first on the cold meat.

Agn. (*aside.*) Oh, agony!

[JEMMY *goes to* MISS PENELOPE, *and whispers in her ear.*

Jem. Mr. Jolly's not what he seems.

Miss P. (*starting.*) No!

Jem. Hush!

Miss P. Bless me!

Jem. Tell you by-and-by—(*aside to* JOLLY.) Did you never hear it before?

Jol. Never! ha, ha, ha!

Jem. Hush! don't laugh.

Jol. Who can help it?

Jem. (*crossing to* Mrs. Docker, L. H.) Madam, I—

Mrs. D. Don't talk to me, sir—I'm looking over my accounts, and you interrupt me. (*going up the stage.*)

Jem. (*aside.*) Not right there, yet. Now, sir, (*to* Docker,) I'll save you two hundred a year.

Doc. In the sum tottle.

Jem. In the sum tottle.

Doc. You're a valuable acquaintance.

Jem. I'll prove myself so,—come sir, come.

[*He takes* Docker's *arm, and hurries him off at the back.*

Mrs. D. I don't like that young man, there's something about him very strange.

Agn. He but looks upon the world in its true colours, ma.

Miss P. I think him a very nice youug person—and very properly suspects every one as I do. (*looking at* Jolly.)

Jol. For my part, when I'm married, there shall always be a knife and fork for him at my table—haven't laughed so much for months. My dear Penny—

Miss P. (*rising.*) Sir!

Jol. I want to see you alone.

Miss P. I don't know that I shall grant your request.

Jol. Nonsense—you must—I want to settle the day—oh, ha, ha! we've neither of us too much time to lose.

Miss. P. Calculate for yourself, sir.

Jol. Come—come, you're fifty.

Miss P. Mr. Jolly!

Jol. So am I—and we both know it—and the sooner we make up our minds to nurse one another the better—don't be angry—laugh as I do—ha! ha! I shall pop back again presently, and talk the matter over—now, none of your prim looks—you know I don't like them—be merry and jolly, and when I see you again, skip into my arms as well as you can, my dear, and what deficiency there may be in youth and beauty, we'll make up for in sincerity and cheerfulness. Ah, now don't look like a female Saracen. I shall expect a smile when I return—and if you are still such a confounded lump of acid—I must sweeten you up with a kiss. I will, ha! ha! I will!

[*Exit,* R. H. 1 E.

Miss P. The more I look at Mr. Jolly the more I feel convinced *he* is not what he seems—how I long for the return of that interesting stranger! (*goes up the stage.*)

Mrs. D. Spiteful fate could not have sent a more mischievous person to the house than that odd-looking young man; Docker will now be meaner than ever—no going to Ramsgate this summer, that I can clearly foresee. [*Exit,* R. H. 1 E.

Enter Thomas Vernon *at the back.*

Ver. Good morning, Agnes; pardon my being quite unable to sympathize with you to-day—I have heard some good news—and am in excellent spirits—my father will return to England next week—by that time I shall have passed my examina-

tion at the college, and a month or two will see me installed as the new surgeon at Hampstead. There, Agnes!

Agn. Nay, Thomas, talk not of hopes to a heart like mine; they are but as the colours of the rainbow, beautiful to gaze upon; but ah! how fleeting!—you will meet a gentleman here to-day, that appears to me the beau ideal of every thing poetic—the incarnation of subdued agony.

Ver. This praise speaks of a rival—I trust, Agnes, that you will not be the first to offer any obstacle to my happiness—our marriage was to have followed my establishment in my profession.

Agn. I offer an obstacle! Thomas, I respect you much—I look upon you as a most deserving young man—but, alas! I am not the person to make you happy—look around you in the world—select from it some more congenial partner for your days than your unhappy Agnes—for alas! I—I cannot explain—I cannot yet open my heart to you—but if you knew, Thomas if—you knew—oh! agony! [*She rushes out,* L. H. 1 E.

Ver. Agnes! why is this? are you mad? Agnes! listen to me—I have a sonnet to the moon for you.

[*Exit, following* AGNES.

Miss P. Umph! There is something very strange in the conduct of Mr. Vernon—and the continual sighing of Agnes is very suspicious;—indeed, as that young man justly observed, there is no knowing any one. What can he have learnt respecting Mr. Jolly? I am in a fever to know—I always thought there was something very peculiar in his manner—what can he be? what has he done? How fortunate that I have been put upon my guard in time, or I might have fallen a sacrifice to the artifices of a villain. Here is my gentleman—I'll not let him see that my suspicions have been roused.

Enter JOLLY, R. H. 1 E.; *seeing* MISS PENELOPE, *he goes up the stage, and closes the door.*

Miss P. Bless me! what can be the meaning of this caution? I begin to be alarmed—if there should be a dagger in his waistcoat-pocket.

[JOLLY *advances to* MISS PENELOPE, *draws a chair, and sits beside her; she retreats a little, he follows her.*

Miss P. Mr. Jolly—where are you coming to?

Jol. To a point, my dear.

Miss P. Oh! he refers to some murderous instrument. Mr. Jolly, if you mean assassination, say so, that I may know how to act.

Jol. Ha! ha! ha! assassination! what are you dreaming of, my dear Penny?

Miss P. Penny! I beg, sir, you will not abbreviate my name in that vulgar manner.

Jol. What is the matter with the old girl?

Miss P. (*starting up.*) Sir—do you wish to add insult to atrocity?

Jol. (*looking at her with astonishment, and beckoning her towards him.*) Come close to me, my dear.

Miss P. No, sir; I wish to keep at a proper distance.

Jol. Have you *only* had coffee for your breakfast this morning?

Miss P. You base man! What do you mean by that?—that *fiend*-like insinuation!—I understand your gross allusion—now, sir, you have completely removed the veil from your black heart—and at last show yourself in your true colours. (*crosses in a rage to* R. H.) For the man, who can so brutally wound the feelings of a female in the manner that *you* have done, *must* be a villain—and—and—(*sobbing*)—I desire, sir, you'll return me all my letters.

Jol. (*aside.*) Zounds, I've lit my pipe with 'em!

Miss P. And—and—the silver tobacco-stopper I gave you—I have done with you for ever.

[*She falls almost fainting into a chair in the centre of the stage—first trying that it will support her.*

Jol. Really my dear, I—I—beg your pardon, my question was merely put in the jocularity of the moment. And if I *have* hurt your feelings, I assure you it was not intentionally, but your manner towards me was so odd, that I thought—I thought, ha! ha! (*is about to laugh, but checks himself.*) Hem! mustn't laugh at a moment like this—she must be coaxed. (*he draws a chair, and by degrees approaches her.*) My dear—

Miss P. Don't come near me, sir!

Jol. My love—

Miss P. Your love!

JEMMY *gently enters from the back.*

Jol. My everlasting, don't bear malice—make it up, the quarrels of lovers are the renewal of love, *you* know that by this time—come—come, when shall it be? when shall I look around me and see our mischievous boys and romping girls, eight or ten of 'em, all kissing you at once—little rogues, eh, my love?—ha, ha, ha! come, come, don't be so dam'd dignified. (*he whispers.*) Say Saturday next, and I'll go for the licence at once, eh, eh?

[*He suddenly gives her a hearty kiss—she screams and jumps up—*JEMMY *comes down* L. H. MISS PENELOPE *is overpowered with confusion—*JOLLY *tries to whistle.*

Jem. O-ho!

Miss P. I would rather have died than this should have happened.

[*She rushes off,* R. H. 1 E.—JOLLY *tries to whistle.*

Jem. You think that's a whistle—but it ain't.

Jol. Ha, ha, delightful moments, arn't they, sir?

Jem. Delicious! oh delicious! as kissing goes by favour, Mr. Jolly. I conclude you must be all right in that quarter—eh?

Jol. To tell you the truth I hardly know—the fact is I want a wife—I'm too far down the wrong side of the hill of life to dream of violent affection—youth and beauty—and all that.

Jem. You merely want comfort.

Jol. Yes—yes.

Jem. And fun.

Jol. That's all—a kind wife and a hearty laugh now and then, and I should be as happy as a king.

Jem. What d'ye think? Docker don't want his cousin to marry—told me so just now—ha, ha—her board and lodging is too good a thing for him to lose, that's it—and it strikes me—this is entirely between ourselves you know—

Jol. Yes, yes!

Jem. That Docker has been poisoning her mind against you.

Jol. O-ho—that accounts for her queer vagaries just now.

Jem. Take my advice, don't notice her for a few days—make faces at her behind her back, and let Docker see you—he'll think there's a rupture—tell no more lies about you—and the effect of his insinuations will die away. Then renew your attentions on the sly.

Jol. I see—I see—Docker never did seem *very* anxious to have the day fixed.

Jem. Of course not!

Jol. Mean old fellow.

Jem. Shocking—shocking—mind what I say.

Jol. I will.

Jem. If you were to insult Miss Pump, it would do no harm—make some appointment on a very cold night, and don't *go.*

Jol. That *will* be fun.

Jem. Won't it? Hush some one's coming—now mum!—I'm your friend.

Jol. You shall be my father, and give me away—

Jem. I will. (*putting him off at the back.*)

Jol. And dine with me every day of the honeymoon.

Jem. I will, and stand godfather to the first, eh?

Jol. Ha, ha, ha! oh, you rogue!

Jem. Ha! ha! now go. (*puts him out at the back, and shuts the door,* Miss Penelope *peeps on* R. H.)

Miss P. Are you alone, sir?

Jem. Quite, madam!

Miss P. Oh, sir! I've been so anxious to see you, ever since your hint about Mr. Jolly. What *did* you mean?

Jem. Will you be secret!

Miss P. Certainly.

Jem. Jolly's a very dangerous man.

Miss P. I guessed as much.

Jem. You have known him how long?

Miss P. Ten years.

Jem. But you don't know his eldest daughter?

Miss P. Eldest daughter! Was he ever married?

Jem. Tizzy vous—don't talk so loud—very fine girl his eldest daughter—as for his poor wife—

Miss P. His poor wife!—

Jem. That he has been separated from fifteen years.

Miss P. You don't say so?

Jem. She can scarcely keep herself and her family, on the four and sixpence per week he allows her.

Miss P. And the wretch proposes to marry me!

Jem. If you accept him her allowance is to be raised to ten shillings to keep her silent.

Miss P. What unheard of villany!

Jem. There's one thing I *cannot* make out.

Miss P. What is that?

Jem. How he has contrived to live since he failed in the coal and potato line.

Miss P. Was he ever in such a calling as that? Bless me!

Jem. There's no knowing any one, is there ma'am?

Miss P. There is not indeed!

Jem. Don't take any notice of him for a few days at least—by that time I may learn more.

Miss P. Oh, sir—how can I be sufficiently grateful? you have saved me from a precipice.

Jem. I have but done the duty of an honest man. Oh, Miss —oh! (*he looks at her for a moment, utters a deep sigh and turns away.*)

Miss P. There is something very interesting about that young man.

Jem. I was going to tell you of Mrs. Tudway opposite.

Miss P. Ah! you *did* mention her.

Jem. Would you believe it!

Miss P. Dear me—no!

Jem. Hush—somebody comes.

Miss P. Pray see me again after dinner in the arbour in the garden.

Jem. Yes—yes.

[JEMMY *snatches her hand, kisses it—she looks tenderly at him,* MISS PENELOPE *going up the stage.*

What a superior creature to that Jolly!

Enter VERNON *followed by* AGNES, L. H. 1 E.

Ver. Who is the fellow? I must and will see him.

Agn. Thomas, restrain your violence—you shock me.

Ver. As you are a stranger here, it is rather necessary we should be acquainted with your name.

Jem. My card, sir. (*giving card.*)

Ver. (*reading.*) "Horace Albemarle, Kensington."

Jem. (*aside.*) My travelling *nom de ger.*

Miss P. (*aside,* U. E. R. H.) Horace Albemarle—he's somebody of high birth.

Ver. (*to* AGNES.) Is this the person who has changed your sentiments?

Agn. I shall not condescend to explain any further, that gentleman is here by pa's invitation.

Ver. (*aside to* JEMMY.) You and I must have some conversation, sir.

Jem. When you please, sir!

Ver. After dinner!

Jem. Shall be delighted.

Enter MRS. DOCKER, R. H. 1 E.

Mrs. D. Mr. Vernon.

Ver. Madam!

Mrs. D. Pray get that creature, (*pointing to* JEMMY,) out of the house—he will encourage my husband in every meanness.

Ver. I will, Mrs. Docker!

Enter SALLY *at the back.*

Sal. Dinner's on table.

Jem. (*to* MISS PENELOPE.) Allow me, madam, to offer you my arm.

Miss P. Thank you, sir!

Enter JOLLY *at the back.*

Jol. (*making faces at* MISS PENELOPE, *and passing to* MRS. DOCKER *on the* R. H.) Docker says you are to take your place at the table.

Mrs. D. I beg to be excused—Agnes and I have dined as he desired.

Jol. Pooh—pooh—nonsense—come—come for the sake of appearances.

Miss P. How I long to give him a hint!

Jem. No! no!

Miss P. Yes! yes!

Mrs. D. (*to* JOLLY.) Offer your arm to Agnes—I wish to speak to Mr. Vernon!

Jol. Certainly—come Agnes, my dear!

JOLLY *crosses to* AGNES *on the* L. H.

Miss P. (*to* JOLLY, *on his* R. H.) Coal and potatoes.

Jol. What d'ye say?

Miss P. Four and sixpence.

Jol. (*astonished.*) For what?

Jem. Come, my dear madam, come.

Miss P. How is your eldest daughter?

Jem. Hush! come! [*Hurries* MISS PENELOPE *off at the back.*

Jol. Poor woman—poor woman--a sad thing, my dear, (*to* AGNES,) when one gives one's mind to exciting stimulants.

Agn. Mr. Jolly!

Jol. Only my fun, my dear—ha, ha, though affairs seem a little wrong now—we shall all come right in time—now to dinner—to dinner. [*Leads* AGNES *off at the back.*

Mrs. D. My dear Mr. Vernon, if you love Agnes you will rid the house of that young man—he will involve the whole family in dissension. I can see it clearly.

Ver. I'll insult him, and kick him out.

Mrs. D. You ought really, for Agnes has confessed—

Ver. What!

Mrs. D. I'm afraid to tell you.

Ver. Pray let me know the worst.

Mrs. D. She has been raving lately of a form of light that visits her in her dreams.

Ver. Well!

Mrs. D. And she is convinced it's that creature.

Ver. Is it possible?

Mrs. D. Now pray rid us of him—he has put such mean notions in my husband's head, that it's frightful to think of.

Ver. I'll talk to him, and find out who he really is.

Mrs. D. Pray do!

Ver. Come to the dining-room and watch him.

Mrs. D. I will. (*taking* VERNON's *arm.*) And if you can pick a quarrel with him, do.

Ver. I will.

Mrs. D. And get him out of the house.

Ver. I will—he shall go!

Mrs. D. He shall, I'm determined! Sally.

Re-enter SALLY.

Sal. Ma'am!

Mrs. D. You must wait at dinner, as the boy has gone away.

[*Exit with* VERNON *at back.*

Sal. Wait at dinner—that I'm sure I shan't; they may wait on themselves—a lady like me to bemean myself in that way—quite enough I think to have to do the work of the house, run of all the errands, and make eight beds every morning, without letting myself down to hand plates to a parcel of people at dinner. Beside I'm not dressed yet; wait till that gentleman sees me, I've got a pound and more in my box. While they're at dinner, I'll run to the second-hand clothes *depot*, and buy some dresses fit for a person like me to be seen in, and then what will they say? Oh dear, what a pity that I'm only a natural lady—ah, if I were a lady now in downright earnest—lots of money as well as lots of nature. Oh, I wish I was!

[*Exit at the back.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE (*Same as Act I.*) *Table at back, on which two candles are burning.*

VERNON *and* JEMMY *heard at the back, in altercation.*

Ver. (*without.*) Don't talk to me, sir!

Jem. But, my dear sir.

Ver. Answer me one question.

Jem. With pleasure—with pleasure.

Enter VERNON *and* JEMMY.

Ver. Answer me one question, sir; the family are walking in the garden—in an hour they will retire to rest, and before I sleep, I must and will be satisfied as to the nature of your views in this house—do they point at Miss Agnes?

Jem. Dear me, no.

Ver. You have been perpetually whispering to her during the evening, and she has appeared gratified at the subject of your observations.

Jem. Merely slight remarks on human nature.

Ver. Well, sir—that young lady is about to become my wife—but since your appearance here I am at a loss to guess the meaning of certain expressions she has used.

Jem. Mere flights of fancy; she has imagined a being of human perfection—a form of light; she has dreamt of it—and on seeing me was struck with my resemblance to that form—that's all, sir. And you, as a poet, and a very charming poet too, ought to understand and allow for such eccentricity of intellect.

Ver. (aside.) Zounds! she never can have permitted a thought of this vulgar little fellow to occupy her mind—no—no—impossible. Now to fulfil my promise to Mrs. Docker, and get him out of the house.

Jem. Have you done with me, sir? I wish to return to the ladies.

Ver. No, sir. *(aside.)* I must pick a quarrel with him. He is to sleep here it seems, and Mrs. Docker and her husband are quite squabbling about it; she has begged of me to insult him, and make him leave the house; and for my own sake—I must and will. Sir! Mr. Albermarle.

Jem. Sir, to you.

Ver. Allow me, in the first place to tell you that Mrs. Docker don't like you—now that's plainly spoken.

Jem. What have I done to the dear lady?

Ver. You have encouraged Mr. Docker in his meanness—you have caused—

Jem. I encourage Mr. Docker in his meanness! Good Heavens! during the happy day that I have passed here—I have observed the worthy gentleman's propensity, and how wretched it makes dear Mrs. Docker and her daughter—and I am merely leading him into extremes—that he may see his fault through a magnifying glass.

Ver. Ah!—well—

Jem. And *you*, sir—you as a poet—ought to have more human charity in your heart than to think so badly of me without knowing me. By the by, I have a sonnet or two of my own on illiberality. *(searching his pockets.)* They're in my trunk—I should like your opinion of them—especially as you are a kindred soul. Ah! sir, charming solace is poesy—isn't it—eh! when one is at outs with the world—to roll one's eye in a fine phrensy, and pour out one's thoughts on paper—delicious isn't it? *We, sir*—souls like ours—*you* and *I*, eh! *we* only know—we only can comprehend such feelings.

Ver. Yes; I confess there is a—a—

Jem. There is, indeed—I understand you. Do you intend to publish?

Ver. I have wished to do so for some time.

Jem. I thought so. Now, if you *do*, I can be of service to you—a friend of mine is the critic of the Weekly Tommyhawk —a hint from me—that's all—quite enough.

Ver. I certainly should wish my last attempt in the Miscellany—

Jem. The Miscellany! Oh! ah!—let me see, your signature is—X Y—or Gammon?

Ver. Sir—

Jem. (*aside.*) Eh! (*aside.*) I've made a slip—Alpha—Beta—Gamma. Ah! that's it—Gamma, sir—the third Greek letter —Greek you know.

Ver. Oh yes, of course—I understand. I thought you said—

Jem. Oh dear no—then your signature is—

Ver. Merely the letter *V.*

Jem. Is it possible?—is that your signature?—*Is* it indeed? Well I never—good gracious—are those delightful lines yours? Give me your hand, I have long wished to meet you. You are an ornament to society. (*taking* VERNON'S *hand.*) Is it possible? Oh! that delicious passage describing the—the— .

Ver. Moon in a mist.

Jem. Ah! (*aside.*) Of course he has a pet passage—I must say —no, really now—beautiful—delightful.

Ver. Oh, sir, you—

Jem. Not at all—Well, I'll not distress you by complimenting you to your face, but really—give me your hand again, I hope we shall be better acquainted—we must have half an hour's talk together to-morrow. I'm delighted at meeting you —charmed—charmed!

[*As* JEMMY *is shaking* VERNON'S *hand,* MRS. DOCKER *appears at the back.*

Mrs. D. What! shaking hands—(*she comes down on the* R. H. *of* VERNON.) I asked you to get him out of the house.

Ver. Why, yes—but the fact is, now I know him better, he really is not such a bad fellow. Odd at first I confess—talk to him yourself.

Jem. (*crosses to* MRS. DOCKER.) Ah, Mrs. D. quite delighted with our friend here, and as for your husband—may I express an opinion?

Mrs. D. Yes, sir.

Jem. Is one of the most liberal men living.

Mrs D. You are the first that ever said so.

Jem. You don't go the right way to arrive at his truly noble heart—hasn't his conduct to me been generous and hospitable in the extreme, to *me* a perfect stranger?

Mrs. D. We are *all* surprised at that.

Jem. No doubt; but how did I extract his better nature—I'll tell you—by humouring his other one. Now, you wish I hear to go to Ramsgate and ride donkeys. You wish for a new bonnet; in short you wish to enjoy yourself as a lady in your circumstances ought.

Mrs. D. You've guessed me to a T.

Jem. Leave it to me, and you shall not only go to Ramsgate but to *Bulloney*, and Brussels, where the carpets are—and in new bonnets too.

Mrs. D. If you accomplish this, you will be the best friend we have known for many a day.

Jem. Trust to me, and observe my method; it will be a lesson for *you*. (*aside.*) I'm all right there I see. [*Goes up the stage.*

Mrs. D. (*aside to* VERNON.) Well, really he is not so disagreeable.

Ver. I must say there is an air of intelligence in his manner, that at first I did not observe.

Jem. (*coming down on the* L. H.) Now, my dear madam, I hope we are friends. (*crossing to centre.*)

Mrs. D. Well, sir, as you really seem to have an anxiety for our comforts, I shall ever be happy to see you.

Jem. Give me your hand.

Mrs. D. There, sir. (*giving her hand to* JEMMY.)

Jem. Mr. Vernon, yours.

Ver. There, sir.

Jem. Now, I trust we have laid the foundation-stone of a temple of mutual esteem, that will endure for ages. (*shaking both their hands.*)

Enter DOCKER *at back, followed by* MISS PENELOPE, AGNES, *and* JOLLY.

Doc. Now, listen to me—sit down all of you, and listen to me.

Jol. Silence—Docker is going to lecture on economy.

[JOLLY *places chairs for* MRS. DOCKER *and himself on the* R. H. JEMMY *brings down two chairs, one for himself, and the other for* MISS PENELOPE, L. H. VERNON *brings chairs forward for himself and* AGNES *on the* R. H.—DOCKER *sits in the centre.*

Miss P. (*looking at* JOLLY.) A married man with a daughter; I see it in his face.

Jol. (*looking at* DOCKER.) Docker *don't* like me—it's clear enough now, a close-fisted old hunks.

Agn. (*to* VERNON.) Have you conquered your absurd prejudice, Thomas?

Ver. Respecting our new friend?

Agn. Yes.

Ver. I am inclined to think him a man of taste.

Agn. Of course.

Mrs. D. (*to* DOCKER.) Now my dear, what have you to propose?

Doc. My friend here, (*pointing to* JEMMY,) has given me a hint relating to our Ramsgate trip.

Mrs. D. Indeed, then I am sure it will be worth attending to.

Miss P. Bless me—she's quite civil at last.

Jem. (*aside to* MISS PENELOPE.) Yes, my precious lamb—but hush!

Doc. (*a pencil and paper in his hand.*) By not going to Ramsgate I shall save fourteen pounds, six, and fourpence.

Mrs. D. What, don't you intend going?

Jem. (*to* MRS. DOCKER.) Hush, my dear madam.

Doc. Now, I propose that instead of gadding, I put away that sum—that you Mrs. D., and Agnes go without bonnets for another month, that we give Sally leave to visit her father for three or four weeks—and stop her wages for that time—while Agnes can do all the work of the house—the making the beds—and hearthstoning the door steps—and so forth.

Agn. (*clasping her hands.*) Oh, insufferable misery.

Doc. I will undertake not to wear any washing waistcoats or trowsers for some time—and the saving by *that*, and going to bed every evening at sunset—so as to avoid lighting candles—it is now May—we must all go to bed at eight o'clock.

Agn. To bed at eight! oh! agony.

Doc. I have calculated that in a month, we shall by these means, save thirty-two pounds, four shillings, and one halfpenny.

Jol. In the tottle?

Doc. In the tottle. And then we'll—

All. What?

Agn. What, pa?

Doc. Place the difference to it—and buy half a hundred in the three per cents.—eh—ha! ha! ha! (*rubbing his hands.*) What d'ye think of that?

All (*but* JEMMY.) Oh!

Mrs D. Oh, dear! I thought—

Agn. So did I.

Jem. Hush, a capital plan, (*they all listen anxiously to* JEMMY,) though I can point out a pleasanter piece of economy.

Doc. Ah! in what way?

Jem. Go on the continent.

All (*but* DOCKER.) Charming! delightful!

Doc. Nonsense—pooh!

Jem. Mr. D. Pardonnez moi. You can't support your family at home under eighteen pounds a month or thereabouts.

Doc. Certainly not.

Jem. Now for fifty pounds you can all live on the continent in ease—and elegance—besides the benefit done to your health—no doctor's bills—think of that—for six months.

Doc. For how much?

Jem. At *Bolloney sur Mare*—or *Dip*—for less than that—fifty pounds—and do the thing *commyfo* too.

Doc. I can.

Jem. Parole de honneur.

Doc. Then we'll start to-morrow.

Mrs. D. Delightful.

Agn. Sweet anticipation.

All. Excellent—charming—clever—clever.

Mrs. D. (*to* JEMMY.) You are a dear friend.

Miss P. He's not a married man. (*looking at* JOLLY.)

Jem. (*aside to* Miss Penelope.) Hush, for gracious sake.

Jol. How vicious Miss Penny looks at me every minute.

Enter Sally *from the back very finely dressed—she walks in front of the party displaying herself particularly to* Jemmy*—she takes the* L. H. *corner.*

Sal. (*speaking affectedly.*) Excuse my coming in so corruptly —but if you please sir, (*to* Jemmy,) you are required in the hall.

Miss P. Sally!

Sal. (*to* Miss Penelope.) Mem!

Miss P. Are you deranged?

Sal. I shall not presume to reply to *you.*

Miss P. Bless me.

Jem. Hush!

Mrs D. and Doc. Sally!

Jem. I beg your pardon—who is it, Sarah?

Sal. Mr. Huxter—the man at the shop in the general line—we—know it, sir, don't we? (*to* Jemmy.)

Jem. Oh! the coal-merchant called about the prices, no doubt. I'll wait on him directly.

Sal. I'll acquaint the person with your intention precocious to your interview. (*she walks out at the back with a genteel air.*)

Mrs. D. Dear me, what *is* the matter with Sally?

Doc. I think she has been at our table-ale—I thought it was getting low.

Jem. Excuse me a minute, I beg.

All. Oh! certainly.

[Jemmy *walks out at the back with great dignity.*

Jol. That's an excellent fellow—and I like him amazingly.

Miss P. His knowledge of human wickedness is indeed great.

Ver. He has a taste for literature I confess.

Agn. And a fine disdain of the world.

Doc. His notions of figures are wonderful.

Mrs. D. He's what I call a real economist.

Sally *re-enters and takes the* R. H. *corner.*

Jol. The drollest dog I ever met with—kills me.

Ver. An excellent critic.

Mrs. D. A capital manager.

Agn. A true philosopher.

Doc. Knows the value of farthings.

Miss P. And is an accute detector of villany.

Sal. Oh! he's a nice young man.

All. Sally!

Sal. I beg pardon—I spoke promiscuously.

Re-enter Jemmy, *quite pale, he falls in a chair in the centre, they all rise, and regard him with anxiety.*

All. My dear sir—what's the matter?

Jem. Don't notice me, I beg, only a shock—unpleasant news.

All. (*thronging round him.*) Dear! dear!

Miss P. He seems faint—open the windows.

Mrs. D. Agnes, run for your smelling-bottle.

[AGNES *runs off at back.*

Ver. (*feeling his pulse.*) 'Tis the effect of alarm.

Jem. Yes, sir; you're right—quite right.

Ver. Pen, ink, and paper—I'll write a prescription.

Doc. They're in my room. (VERNON *going.*) Don't tear a whole sheet—you'll find the back of a letter.

[VERNON *goes off at the back.*

Jem. Leave me a moment—I shall soon recover—news of a parent at the point of dissolution—too much for me. Leave me alone to recover myself, pray—must take the mail in the morning—hundred and twenty miles across the country—too late to start now—pray leave me.

Mrs. D. (*to* DOCKER.) Come, my dear.

Jem. Tell Mr. Vernon and your charming daughter not to trouble themselves—shall be better presently.

Doc. Yes, yes; leave him alone, I beg.

Mrs. D. It makes one worse to be bothered—Mr. Jolly take Miss Pump a moonlight walk on the lawn.

[DOCKER *and* MRS. DOCKER *go off at the back.*

Jol. Will you take my arm, Miss?

Miss. P. I never walk in the moonlight with dangerous men.

Jol. Eh?

Miss. P. Four and sixpence.

Jol. Eh?

Miss P. Now go and look at the moon, and reflect on my words.

Jol. I will, and if it isn't at the full—I'm very much mistaken.

[JOLLY *goes off at the back*; SALLY *advances to* JEMMY.

Sal. Do you feel a little renowated, now?

Miss P. Sally—leave the room.

Sal. How provoking—I can't have him to myself a minute—It's shameful. (*she goes off,* R. H. 1 E., *in a rage.*)

Miss P. Upon my word that girl gives herself strange airs. (*she advances gently to* JEMMY.) Better now, Mr. A?

Jem. Yes, my precious lamb.

Miss P. I'm so glad. (*taking his hand.*) You are still a little feverish.

Doc. (*peeping in at the back.*) Will you leave him alone?

Miss P. Dear, dear, I can't get a syllable in confidence with him. [*Exit,* R. H. 1 E.

Doc. *I'll* keep you from being disturbed—you don't want to write do you?

Jem. No, I thank you.

Doc. Then one light is sufficient.

[DOCKER *snuffs out one of the candles and goes off at the back, closing the doors.*

Jem. (*alone.*) Very awkward—the police after me—have traced me to this place—how could it have been discovered?—I

always thought my old missusses brother too stupid a fellow ever to have stirred in the matter, and after so long a time too —what can *he* want with her fifty pounds a year; I'm sure he had quite enough—and as she left me her ready money I thought there was no harm in making a codicil in my favour of her long annuity. Um—this comes in being so clever at imitating her handwriting—however, I must get away from here to-night—and Miss Penelope must keep me company too —walk to the inn on the high road—get post horses—*she'll* pay, and off to the continent, all snug—I must put on the high pressure.

[*He sits in the chair in thought,* MISS PENELOPE *peeps in* R. H.

Miss P. Better now.

Jem. Yes, love—and a word with you will quite restore me.

Miss P. Oh, sir!

Jem. Pray sit down a moment.

He places a chair for MISS PENELOPE *on the* R. H.

Miss P. Hush, I'll shut the doors.

[*She goes up the stage to close the doors at the back, when* SALLY *comes in on tiptoe on the* L. H.—*and as* JEMMY *is wrapped in thought she sits beside him.*

Sal. Better, Mr. A.

Miss P. Sally!

Sal. Oh! (*jumping up,*) there she is again—I never saw any thing so aggravating.

Miss P. I'm ashamed of you, Sally—your conduct is highly indelicate—and the manner in which you have dressed yourself out to-day is very unbecoming your station.

Sal. Is it?—just ask that gentleman *his* opinion. But it's all envy—natural born ladies are always found out—whatever they may put on—an't they, sir?

Miss P. How dare you address your conversation to Mr. Albemarle? Leave the room.

Sal. I shall contain in my present position—one oughtn't to be ordered about by one's inferiors in every point of view—especially in pure natural elegance.

Miss P. I never heard such impertinence in all my life—your master shall know of your conduct.

Sal. And if he knew of yours it would be nothing more than equivalent—setting your cap at a gentleman young enough to be your grandson—make your will, and go to your progeny.

Miss P. My progeny! an insolent hussey.

Sal. Proceed in your interpolations—I look down upon you with contempt.

Jem. Sally—Sally—be a lady—you can if you like.

Sal. I will, Mr. A., in spite of appearances.

Miss P. I'm breathless with indignation; Mr. Docker! (*calling.*)

Sal. You needn't call master—I've given vent to my commotions, and now I shall retire.

Jem. Sally!

Sal. (*aside to* JEMMY.) Don't have any thing to say to her; she'll think you mean to murder her.

Jem. Go, go, there's a dear.

Sal. As you are so pressing, I'm too much of a lady to refuse, I wish you a very good evening, sir. (*she curtsies to* JEMMY, *with great dignity.*) As to you, Miss Pump, and a precious one you are, I look upon you as so much rubbish, and the sooner the dustman calls for you, the cleaner the house will be.

[*Exit* SALLY, L. H. 1 E.

Miss P. I'll go to her master, I'm determined; she shall have warning immediately.

Jem. (*checking her.*) My dearest love, I have something a million times more important, for you to attend to; you observed my agitation—you saw how poorly I was?

Miss P. I did, with alarm.

Jem. Sudden news of a dear parent at the point of dissolution—I must leave you immediately—that is—in the course of an hour or so.

Miss P. Leave me! and when may I see you again?

Jem. Perhaps never more.

Miss P. Oh!

Jem. I have many enemies amongst my relations.

Miss P. So have I.

Jem. You have—I intend to quit the country; may I again urge my point?

Miss P. To fly with you.

Jem. This very night—you told me half an hour since, you would turn it in your mind—have you turned it?

Miss P. I have.

Jem. Well?

Miss P. I'm afraid.

Jem. Think of the dangers that beset you in this family. Docker thinks when you die he'll come in for your money—Don't you eat any pie-crust in this house.

Miss P. Lord, sir!

Jem. I could tell you things that would make your hair stand an end—think how I have exposed that Jolly to you—he suspects that I know him. You see a change in him, don't you?

Miss P. I do—I saw him making horrid faces at me when my back was turned, a wretch.

Jem. Mr. Vernon too, is a young doctor, wants to marry Agnes. Suppose Docker to come in for your money, when he dies, it goes to Agnes—don't you see where the oxalic acid is to come from?

Miss. P. Oh, sir, you make me tremble from head to foot.

Jem. The chair that broke down with you this morning—

Miss P. What of that?

Jem. Done on purpose.

Miss P. Abominable!

Jem. Docker had half sawed the leg before you sat in it, in

hopes to break yours. Vernon was to come in and order immediate amputation.

Miss P. What, cut it off.

Jem. Cut it off.

Miss P. You horrify me.

Jem. You would have died in agonies; so between Docker and Jolly, and the surgeon, I would not insure your life a day —a day! not an hour.

Miss. P. Oh, take me from this abode of horrors.

Jem. I will.

Miss P. I can stay no longer.

Jem. Pack up all to-night,

Miss P. I will.

Jem. When the family have retired, I'll come out and tap at your door, take your luggage—we'll escape out of my room window into the garden, gain the high road, get horses at the first inn, then for the sea-side to my poor mother—receive her blessing and save your life.

Miss. P. I will. I'll not sleep another night under this roof.

Jem. They all go to bed at eleven.

Miss P. (*looking at her watch.*) It's near ten now.

Jem. Don't forget your watch, we shall want that, and put together all your loose silver. I have some, it will be handy for the boys and 'pikes—I'll ask for my flat candlestick, and go to my room at once. You do the same, and begin quietly packing up.

Miss P. I will.

Jem. Then farewell for the present—one salute.

Miss P. No!

Jem. But one.

Miss P. No; it's very wrong.

Jem. But it's very pleasant.

Miss P. Oh, Horace—you have entirely subdued me.

[JEMMY *kisses her—she rushes off* L. H. 1 E. JOLLY *has entered by the door at back, and stands in amazement—a bedroom candlestick in his hand.*

Jem. (*turns and sees* JOLLY.) Ah, my dear fellow, did you—did you see my bit of fun just now?

Jol. I did.

Jem. Wasn't it droll?

Jol. Very; I hardly know yet whether I ought to laugh.

Jem. You ought to roll on the floor with delight.—I gave her a kiss.

Jol. So I perceived.

Jem. I told her you sent it.

Jol. Oh! ah!—and she took it.

Jem. Immediately.—Ha! ha! ha! wouldn't have allowed it otherwise, of course.

Jol. Ha! ha fine fun—what people call kissing by proxy.

Jem. To be sure—kings and queens get married by it sometimes. Now, you have only to blind Docker a little longer, and you'll soon be a happy man.

Jol. Shall I?

Jem. Sure.

Jol. Docker's waiting to show you to your room—he don't like sitting up too late—the candles you know. Ha! ha! but you're quite well again, I see.

Jem. Quite—where's my worthy friend? take me to him—I've such a joke for you.

Jol. Don't tell me now—I'm going to bed, and shan't sleep for laughing.

Jem. The funniest thing.

Jol. Now don't, I shall die.

Jem. You never heard the like.

Jol. Oh! oh! oh! I shall drop before you tell me.

[*As they are going off,* L. H. 1 E., JEMMY *whispers in his ear.*

Jol. Ha! ha! ha!

Jem. It's a fact.

Jol. No; ha! ha!

Jem. Yes.

Jol. Ha! ha! how my sides will shake all night.

Jem. Tell you another.

Jol. No, no.

Jem. I will.

Jol. I'll run away—or I shall die. (JOLLY *runs off,* R. H. 1 E.)

Jem. Got out of that scrape. [*Exit following.*

SCENE II.—*A room in the house.*

Enter SALLY, R. H., *carrying a bedroom candlestick, and reading a handbill.*

Sal. The more I read, the more horrified I am. While I was bolting the garden-gate, a policeman came up, a young man that I sometimes demean myself to talk to, and put this printed paper in my hand. I have read it twice, and it has turned my whole mask of blood. (*Reading.*) "One hundred pounds reward; whereas James Wheedle stands charged with forging the codicil to the will of Mrs. Tabitha Tucker, deceased, with whom he lived in the ca—c—a—(*spelling*)—capacity of servant; has been traced from Dover to Hampstead, five feet four inches in he—i—g—ht—height, and very in—sin—oh! insinuating in his manners; has just arrived from *Bologney.* Whoever will apprehend him, and lodge him in one of her Majesty's jails, will receive the above reward." How very like that nice young man. Oh! dear, how dreadful to think of—if all the family had not gone to bed, I'd scream *murder*! But it can't be, must be some curious coincydence. Eh! (*looking off,* L. H.) Why, there he is—and if he arnt tapping at Miss Penelope's door, I'm a Dutchman. Oh! I shall faint away—she puts her head out at the door. Now they are whispering. Oh! shocking—shocking goings on—who'd ha' thought it? And such a perfect gentleman too as he seems—I'll put out my light and watch them. (*she puts the extinguisher on her candle, and goes off,* L. H., *on tiptoe.*)

SCENE THE LAST.—*A passage and landing place—a well staircase seen at the back—on the* L. H. 4 E. *a door opening to* MISS PENELOPE'S *bedroom—on the* 2 E. *on the* L. H. *is a door leading to* MR. JOLLY'S *bedroom—on the* 3 E. *on the* R. H. *is a door leading to* DOCKER'S *room—on the* 2 E. *is* MISS AGNES'S *room door.*

Jem. (*discovered tapping at* MISS PENELOPE'S *door.*) I've got one of her boxes safe in my room, which is only a little jump into the garden from the window—and will be the way out of the house; I hope she won't be long, I'm quite in a fidget to be on the road—let me once get there, and I'll whisk her off to Van Demon's land or Buffalo. (*The door* L. H. 4 E. *opens, and* MISS PENELOPE'S *arm is seen to place a bandbox in* JEMMY'S *care, and disappears.*) Be quick, my soul, I'll take this to my room.

[JEMMY *goes off with the box at back, and descends the staircase—*DOCKER *looks out his room, his nightcap and flannel wrapper on—a light in his hand.*

Doc. Who's that in the passage? I'm sure I heard whispering and footsteps. No; all's silent. I had better go down and see if all the doors are fast. (*he goes out at the back carrying his light.*) [JOLLY *appears from his room, his coat off, &c.*

Jol. There's that infernal tom-cat in the passage again, if I can catch him, I'll shoe him with walnut shells, and frighten Docker out of his wits for fun. Tom! Tom! where are you, you villain?

[*He goes up the stage, and while looking about near* MISS PENELOPE'S *door, it opens—her arm appears bearing a large corded trunk, it is put into* JOLLY'S *hand.*

Miss P. (*within.*) That's the heaviest.

[JOLLY *stands astonished with the box in his hand.*

Jol. Oh, this is the heaviest, is it? What joke is being played off now? this is the heaviest—what the deuce is Miss Pump pitching her boxes about at this time of night for. (*he comes down the stage.*) Some fun going on no doubt.

DOCKER *re-appears up the stairs at the back.*

Doc. All's safe below. Eh! who is that with a box in his hand—its Jolly—I'll watch him. (DOCKER *goes into his room.*)

Jol. (*near his room door.*) I had better deposit this in my room and peep out again. [*He enters his room carrying the box.*

MISS PENELOPE *appears from her room wrapped in a large shawl, carrying a muff, a calash on her head, and fully equipped for travelling—a bundle in her hand.*

Miss P. Now, now! I'm ready. (*in a low whisper.*)

[DOCKER *looks out from his room; a candle in his hand.* MISS PENELOPE *perceives him, utters a cry, and runs into her room, shuts the door.*

Doc. I'll be hanged but Jolly and Miss Penelope are going to elope! Mrs. Docker, my dear, get up.

He re-enters his room, stage dark Sally appears on tiptoe, R. H. JOLLY *re-enters from his room on tiptoe; they run against each other.*

Sal. Oh, who's that?

Jol. More fun. (*he runs into his room again.*)

Sal. Oh, dear, how frightened I am. Who could that be?

[DOCKER *comes from his room and taps* SALLY *on the shoulder.*

Sal. Now, who's that?

Doc. Me.

Sal. Oh, sir, was it you run up against me?

Doc. No, no; silence. Come with me.

Sal. Where, sir!

Doc. Silence! (*He takes* SALLY *by the hand up the stage, speaking, into his room.*) Give me a light.

[*A light is placed in* DOCKER'S *hand; stage half light.*

Sal. Oh, sir, how you frightened me, I am all in a fantig.

Doc. Hush! stand here, keep your eye on that door, (*pointing to* MISS PENELOPE'S *room.*) There's something going on very wrong.

Sal. I thought so.

Doc. Jolly's door opens—stand back.

[JOLLY *peeps from his room, he sees* SALLY *and* DOCKER *together*—DOCKER *holding his hand before the candle.*

Jol. Oho! Docker and the maid, Eh! I never could have thought it of old Joe. Ha! Ha! this *is* fun. Well it's not my place to interfere. (*he re-enters his room and closes the door.*)

Doc. (*calling in his room, in a low voice.*) Mrs. Docker!

[MRS. DOCKER *comes out, her nightcap and wrapper on.*

Mrs. D. What is the matter?

Doc. Hush!

Mrs. D. Gracious heavens! what is it? thieves.

Doc. Hark!

Mrs. D. Oh, don't.

Doc. A footstep on the stairs.

Sal. Oh, I shall transpire.

Mrs. D. So shall I.

Doc. Be firm—be firm—come into my room.

DOCKER, MRS. DOCKER, *and* SALLY *enter his room and close the door—stage dark—*JEMMY *appears cautiously up the stairs.*

Jem. I hope she's ready now—I've opened my window—the garden gate is on the latch—my room is only four feet from the ground—surely the old girl is lively enough to jump that, (*he taps at* MISS PENELOPE'S *door,*) now dearest! (*she appears.*)

Miss P. Go away—go away!

Jem. You surely haven't changed your mind.

Miss P. Docker's not asleep.

Jem. No!

Miss P. No.

Jem. Nonsense, both he and his wife are snoring a duett.
Miss P. Are you sure? (*a snore heard in* DOCKER's *room.*)
Jem. Don't you hear? come, my little trembler—trust to your Horace—can you jump four feet?
Miss P. I'll try.
Jem. If not, I must take you on my back—come—come.

[JEMMY *leads her off at the back—they descend the stairs—* DOCKER *appears from his room.*

Doc. What the deuce! our new friend is the Lothario.

[*He goes off on tiptoe at the back—and down the stairs—* SALLY *appears from* DOCKER's *room.*

Sal. I never could have believed it.

[*She goes off at the back on tiptoe—and down the stairs—* MRS. DOCKER *appears.*

Mrs. D. That old woman ought to be ashamed of herself.

[MRS. DOCKER *goes off on tiptoe—and down the stairs—* JOLLY *appears from his room.*

Jol. There's some fine fun going on in the house—I'll make one of the party.

[*He goes off at the back on tiptoe, and down the stairs.*

AGNES *enters from her room with candle, stage light.*

Agn. I'm so dreadfully alarmed; in looking from my window at the stars, I'm sure I saw two or three men lurking in the garden—I must wake pa.

[*As she is going up the stage towards* DOCKER's *room, a gun is heard at the back;* AGNES *screams, and puts down her light;* JOLLY *runs on up the stairs, followed by* VERNON; AGNES *falls half fainting in the arms of* VERNON, *on the* L. H. *corner.*

Agn. Oh! heavens!

[MRS. DOCKER *staggers up the stairs, followed by* DOCKER, SALLY, *and* AMOS HUXTER.

Sal. Murder! murder!

[*She runs into the* R. H. *corner,* HUXTER *supports her.*

Doc. (R. H.) Somebody has trod on the spring-gun.
Mrs. D. Oh! my dear—support me.

[MRS. DOCKER *falls fainting in* DOCKER's *arms.*

Jol. (L. H.) What is it—what's the matter?

[MISS PENELOPE *appears up the stairs, pale and breathless, she runs to* JOLLY, *and faints off in his arms.*

Miss P. Help—support me—I shall die.
Jol. What the deuce is the matter?
Doc. and Ver. What's the matter?

[*A short pause;* JEMMY WHEEDLE *appears at the back, in*

the custody of two Bow-street officers; they lead him forward, all regard him with astonishment.

Doc. Explain, I beg—what is the cause of this strange scene?

Hux. Oh! Mr. Docker—that unfortunate young man—my nephew.

All. Your nephew!

Hux. I called this evening to warn him, but he would be so rash as to stay here.

Doc. Well?

Hux. I kept near the house all night, as I saw it was watched. He appeared in the garden, with a lady—she trod on the spring-gun.

Doc. It was not charged.

Hux. And immediately my poor nephew was apprehended.

Doc. For what?

Hux. Forgery of the codicil of his late missusses will.

All. Oh! I'm astonished!

Mrs. D. Who could have believed it?

Sal. Five feet four inches—insinuating in his manners (*showing the placard.*)

Miss P. Horace, is this true?

JEMMY *shakes his head ruefully.*

Miss. P. How could I have been so deceived? there really is no knowing any one. Oh! Mr. Jolly, if you were not a married man—

Jol. A what?

Miss P. And if Mr. Docker didn't mean to poison my pie-crust—

Doc. Poison your what?

Jol. My dear, I'm not a married man, though I soon hope to be one.

Doc. I don't wish to poison you—

Miss P. That gentleman assured me that you—(*pointing to* JOLLY)—were a married man—with a daughter—and that my life was in danger in this family.

Doc. and Jol. You said that, sir. (*to* JEMMY.)

Jem. I may as well confess it was an interesting fiction.

Jol. And do you recollect what you told me, sir?

Jem. If you believed it—that was your fault, not mine.

Agn. Is *this* the form that has visited me in my dreams? Oh! Thomas! (*turning to* VERNON, *and giving her hand to him.*)

Ver. So this is the excellent critic? who had a friend in the Weekly Tomahawk.

Doc. The clever economist—there's a mistake in your sum tottle, my friend.

Jol. Is this the fellow full of fun.

Sal. Never mind, he knows a real lady when he sees one. So he's not so bad after all's said and done.

Doc. What have you to say, sir?

Jem. But one word to my friends. (JEMMY *advances to the audience, between the two officers.*) What a pity that my weak point should have been a want of common honesty. Well, perhaps, this sad climax to my little career may inculcate one moral lesson.—In studying the weak points of others—be careful not to forget your own.

THE END.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS.

SAL. HEX. MRS. D. DOC. MISS P. JOL. VERN. AGN.

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